



Report to the Auburn City Council

Action Item

Agenda Item No.

12

City Manager's Approval

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Richard J. Ramirez, Interim City Manager
Date: May 12, 2014
Subject: Consider Adopting Policies and Procedures for Establishing a Council Follow-Up Log

The Issue

Providing a means to assure matters brought up during a City Council meeting will be followed up yet without the expectation that the matter must return to the Mayor and City Council for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION:

A motion would be in order, subject to any modifications to the proposed policies and procedures, to adopt this staff report as the City Council's Follow-up Log Policy.

DISCUSSION:

At the April 14, 2014 regular Council Meeting Council Members asked the Interim City Manager to bring forward a means to address questions raised at the City Council meeting or even "off-line", but may not warrant a staff report and full consideration by the Council at a regular City Council meeting. This report attempts to address such situations.

On any given day, elected officials might be approached by a constituent about a topic or issue. In an effort to be responsive to constituent requests many public agencies have implemented some form of a "Follow-Up Log (FUL)".

Follow-Up Log (FUL)

The FUL (see Example I) provides for the ability at any regularly scheduled meeting, for a Council Member to raise publically an issue of concern, request for information or similar action under comments from the dais. How would a FUL work? In this case following airing the matter:

Step One: The Mayor would ask the City Manager (CM), hearing no objections from the Council, to assign the matter to the Follow-Up Log (FUL).

Step Two: Unless he CM indicates a reason for not placing the matter on the FUL, the CM would place the matter on the FUL on the Monday following the Council meeting when the matter was brought to the CM's attention by the Mayor.

Step Three: The FUL would be published weekly on the City Web Page and would contain at a minimum the following:

- Who asked for the matter to be placed on the FUL
- The matter of concern (say a request for information or a field problem).

- Who is accountable for preparing a “report back”; the “report back is a short memo (less than two pages) outlining a resolution related to the matter raised or answering a question.
- The GM assigns a tentative date for a staff member to get back in writing to the Council Member or Citizen raising the topic with a copy to the entire Council.

Note: This does not preclude the public from raising a question at the Council meeting but only a Council Member can ask the Mayor during a regular Council meeting to place the matter on the FUL.

Step Four: Once the “report back” is generated, the matter is listed on the FUL as “Completed” unless a Council Member ask the Council to place the matter a future Council agenda so as to discuss further..

The FUL process clearly identifies a means to track “follow up” questions, concerns or requests. Following a “venting” of the matter, if the issue is resolve to the satification of the inquirer, then the matter is considered complete. If not the matter can return to the full City Council for further consideration.

Agencies like using the FUL in large part for two reasons:

- The process can assist in making Council meetings shorter by dealing with the matter off line.
- The process provides for a simple and efficient method to allow City Members to telegraph to their constituents they are following up on concerns yet without taking up extraordinary amounts of the Council meeting or staff time.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There may be a small reduction in operating cost given the length of Council meetings could be reduced, thereby lowering the cost of chargeable staff time and utilities.

Attachment: Example of Follow-Up Log